A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, April 17. 1708.

AND now, Gentlemen, the Affair in *Scotland*, I mean as to the *French* Part, I hope is pretty well over, and I dare say, they will not think of that Work again in haste—And this I take for the first Article in this Summers Work, and I hope, may be an Introduction to the rest of the Campaign.

Shall we now look round us a little, and see, what Part of the publick Affairs are just now upon the Anvil, either Abroad or at Home?

And first to look abroad; All Things are preparing for opening the Campaign, the *French* are expecting your utmost Efforts in the *Netherlands*; they are aware of the Designs of your pushing them heartily in *Flanders*, they are disappointed in the Diversion they expected their *Caledonian* Enterprize would have been to us; they know, the Enterview between two such Generals as Prince *Eugene* and the Duke of *Marlborough* is not on a slight Occasion; and for this Reason they have made great Detachments from the *Upper Rhine* to *Flanders*, almost 20000; Men have slopt, as we are told, the Troops they were sending from *Dauphiné* to *Catalognia*, and have order'd them down to the *Rhine* to supply the Room of those sent from thence——And thus they prepare to act defensively in all Places; but in *Spain*, they push at us with all their Might, and indeed their Politicks but too plainly appear in it; for here we are not in a Proportion to our other Strengths, able to meet them; and I cannot say, our Prospect on that Side

is

is equally promising as in *Flanders*, on the *Rhine*, and the *Moselle*.

From them let us look to our own Affairs; In *Holland* you have the Duke of *Marlborough* and Prince *Eugene* met in Congress, to determine what Course to steer in this great Voyage of the War; what Measures they agree on, are also concerted with and digested by the Elector, Duke of *Hanover*: As these are the three greatest Generals of this Age, and their Efforts for this general Cause have always been extraordinary, it cannot be suppos'd, that they meet here upon Trifles.

It looks a little pleasantly to me to see Prince *Eugene*, one of the greatest Men of Arms in the World, to stand loose as it were, and out of Command; no Body knows where to look for him, or where he is to command. It is plain he is not out of the Councils of *Europe*, nor will he be out of the Field; but where shall we find him? Let us examine a little; On the *Rhine* it cannot be, the Elector of *Brunswick* is embark'd there; in *Flanders* it cannot be, the Duke of *Marlborough* supplies that Part; in *Savoy* there is no Sign it, all Things look too backward there; there must then be some close Design, some secret Contrivance, to let this Prince with an Army drop as it were out of the Clouds, and forming himself, on a suddain show his Face where he is least expected.

This, I know, People suspect to be on the *Moselle*, from whence some Irruption into *France* is expected—— I must confess, it is the most effectual Method to make all th Forces of *France* retire, like the Blood to the Heart, and one Blow near Home would immediately cause them to abandon remote Conquests, and fly to defend the Center—But I am not convinc'd of the Feasibleness of the Thing, unless they can be push'd upon a Battle; if that could be done, I see no Ground to doubt of Victory, from both the Superiority of Troops, and of the Quallity of either Side, in which I think it is no Vanity to pretend to outdo them.

But O this *Spanish* Affair, I confess it hurts me, when I speak of it——If some *Coup d'Eclat* in *Flanders* does not happen, and happen early too, we cannot look for a great Deal of good News on that Side, till Time gives us Leave to send over farther Assistance.

I doubt not, but Measures are taking to supply them, and nothing gives me Apprehensions so much, as the Advantage the *French* have in Situation, which in Point of Time quite anticipates us; if the *French* do their utmost this forward Season of the Year, without doubt they have too much Opportunity; but if they fail to carry their Point early, the latter Campaign may make us Amends upon them.

I do not therefore give *Portugal* over for lost, as I confess I once did, and some People do still; if the *Portuguese* defend themselves but with an tollerable Activity, and with the least Proportion of Success, till Forces can be sent to support them.

Indeed we are expecting great Things to be done by the *French*, who now attack the Confederates with three Armies on that side, and promise themselves entirely to dispossess King *Charles*, and we ought indeed to expect the worst; but King *Charles* has a pretty good Army, and has more Supplies at hand, and we are not quite out of Hopes that he shall defend himself, till he may be enabled to look them in the Face, and in his Turn push them to their former Retreat.

Thus stand our Affairs abroad, while the Eyes of all *Europe* are fix'd upon the Consultations at the *Hague*, and eagerly expecting the Issues of such a Meeting as this is; if it issues in bringing Prince *Eugene* to command a separate Army in *Flanders* or on the *Moselle*, I shall, I confess, have greater Expectations from it, than ever I had from the Project of *Ihoulon*, of which I must own, I never saw any great Probability of Success.

But all this must be left to Time and Providence; I shall in my next look Home, and examine the State of Affairs there, upon the Conclusion of the Parliament, and the approaching View of a new Election; in which I doubt, I shall shew you many a melan-

melancholly Prospect, and have Occasion to tell you many an ill-natur'd Story; which I hope, however to assist you in correcting and improving to your Advantage, if you please but to put on some of your Spectacles, and look about you.

MISCELLANEA.

THE Town has so often amus'd it self, if I may properly so call it, with the Chymera of the Pretender's being taken, that I cannot but make a little merry with the Notion in general about it, let the serious Part alone to speak it self.

And first to you Gentlemen that are fully possessed with an Opinion, it's no Matter how grounded, whether well or ill, that we have catch'd the young Gudgeon on our Angle, and that he is positively on Board the *Salisbury*. Well, Gentlemen, and what would you have done with him now, can you resolve me that Query? ——If you would ask me my Opinion, I shall give it you at last; but first let me give you a short Dialogue between two *Wou'd-be-Statesmen* on this Head as I met with it in common Conversation——*A.* met with *B.* at a Country *Coffee House*, when this Doubt was first stated in publick, and began thus with him.

A. Well, Neighbour *B*, do you hear the good News from the *North*?

B. What News, are the *French* beaten?

A. As good, for they are fled, and have left the best of their Cargo behind them.

B. What do you mean, the Prince of *Wales*? I know there is a Talk of it, but I do not believe a Word of it.

A. I cannot help that, I believe it, and am very glad to hear it.

B. First of all I do not believe it; and Secondly if I did, I do not know whether I should be glad of it or no.

A. Why not glad of it? I am sure you are no *Jacobite*, would it not put an End to all our Troubles?

B. *No not at all*, it would rather encrease them; for we all know, *he has a Sister*, whether pretended or not we will not dispute; and if he be gone, the Title is preserv'd in the Sister, *Who*, if the *French* King pleases to match her to his Grandson, the Duke of *Berry*, transposes the Claim to the House of *Bourbon*, and so the *French* King entails a lasting Pretence to the Crown of *England* in his own Family.

A. I do not value their Claim a Farthing, so his Head were but off.

B. But I am at a Doubt again there.

A. What Doubt can there be in that, pray?

B. Why my Doubt is, what we shall do with him if we had him; and therefore as I said, I know not whether to wish or doubt, as to his being taken.

A. *Do with him!* Why send him where most K—s go, is he not attainted by Parliament, and dead in Law, the Law must be executed, *Curat Lex.*

B. But *which way* to send him is the doubt with me, I am for his being sent as well as you.

A. Why *Axe*, or *Halter*, or any thing, let him choose for himself, what do you question about it?

B. Why, Neighbour, I am not settled in that, and my Doubts are upon this Foundation—If you cut off his Head, to me it seems, as if you own'd the Dignity of his Birth, and consequently his Right of Blood, and so put the Queen also upon a Necessity to cut off her own Brother; on the other hand, *if you hang him*, you seem to determine his Birth as spurious, without being able to prove it; these Things, I own, shock me, and make me very doubtful in the Case.

A. Well, well; first let me be but sure we have him, I'll find you out an Expedient for this.

B. I am not very sollicitous about that, I had rather beat him than take him.

A. Why